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BOOK REVIEWS.

A SKETCH OF ENGLISH LEGAL HISTORY, by Frederic W. Maitland and Francis C. Montague. Edited with Notes and Appendices by James F. Colby. Pp. x, 229. G. P. Putnam's Sons. New York and London. 1915.

Mr. J. F. Colby, Parker Professor of Law in Dartmouth College, has done a most admirable bit of work. There has long been need of a good introductory study of English Legal History. The well-known works of Pollock and Maitland and Holdsworth are too technical for the beginner, while Jenks's *Short History of English Law*, though of brief compass, fails through an attempt to treat too many topics. It was a happy inspiration which led Mr. Colby to bring together in one brief volume the series of articles contributed to *Traill's Social England* by the late Professor Maitland and Professor Montague. These articles, scattered as they were through the large volumes of "*Social England*," were not easily available to the student. It is true that Professor Maitland's sketch was reprinted in Mr. Fisher's edition of his miscellaneous writings (*Collected Papers of F. W. Maitland*, II; 417-496), but it is a great advantage to have it in one single volume together with the articles by Professor Montague which bring the sketch of legal history down to the end of the nineteenth century.

Maitland's work is, of course, well known, and the present sketch, written in his tense, nervous style, will command the admiration of every reader. By comparison, Mr. Montague is somewhat disappointing. His style is not so graphic; it will scarcely fulfill the expectations of those who remember his brilliant introduction to Bentham's *Fragment on Government*. Mr. Colby's work as editor is well done. He has supplemented the text by inserting extracts from the works of Pollock and Maitland and Jenks. In the appendices he has given useful extracts to be used as supplementary reading. His notes are brief and serve to explain allusions which might baffle the beginner. Furthermore, he has added to each chapter a list of readings which is most suggestive.

It may seem captious to make any criticism of so excellent a book. We think, however, that Mr. Colby has made somewhat too ready use of *Taswell-Langmead's Constitutional History* when it might have been better to quote a later work. It would seem also that the unsuspecting student should not be referred (e.g., p. 43, note 2) to the *Edition of Bracton* by Sir Travers Twiss without a word of caution. Again, to define benefit of clergy (p. 73, note 1) as "a privilege from capital punishment granted to all who could read" is certainly misleading and actually untrue of that institution in the time of Henry II. In the main, however, the work of the editor is very well done. Mr. Colby has placed all students of Legal History deeply in his debt.

W. B.